1: McGee E-5 (1894-1895)1898 NU31 Seri NU31

614 Classed with respect to major administration, therefore, the clan may be regarded as an informal *adelphiarchy* (*ἀδελφός* and *ἄρχος*) or *adelphocracy* (*ἀδελφός* and *κρατός*). It has none of the elements of the patriarchy, since male lineage is not recognized, and can not be classed as a matriarchy, since the clanmother is administratively subordinate to her brothers; while the avunculate functions are apparently inchoate and indirect, i. e., exercised only through or in conjunction with the clanmother. In short, the clan is ordinated or regimented in ostensible accordance with physical power, though the real faculty is confused (after the fashion of primitive thinking generally) with mystical faculties, imputed largely on magical grounds but partly on grounds of age-reverence, etc. Now, when two or more clans combine, the basis on 578 which the common chiefship is determined is similar to that determining the clan leadership; at the outset three factors enter, viz, (1) the 614 seniority of the clans in the accepted tribal mythology (2) the prowess 643 of the respective clan leaders (always weighed in conjunction with the [756] shamanistic potency of their consorts), and (3) the numerical strength of the respective clans; but practically, so far as can be judged from all available information, the choice really reflects physical force, since in case of doubt the strongest and bravest man becomes the chief by virtue of his strength and bravery, while the strongest clan finds fair ground for claiming seniority in the very fact of its strength. Naturally disputes arise in the adjustment of the several relations; and in the actual analysis in council, the dispute is commonly reduced to a contest between gods and men, i. e., between the claims for mystical and magical potencies on the one hand and the claims of brawn and bone on the other hand, so that strength wins, unless omens or prodigies turn the scale—which happens often enough to keep the subjective and the objective elements in fairly equal balance. Sometimes the contests are quickly settled; again they last for months, during which the tribe struggles under its weight of Cerberus heads; and repeatedly the disputes have ended in the annihilation of clans, or even in the tribal fissions attested by the recorded and traditional history of the Serian family.

643 The chiefship once determined, the leader bends all energies toward maintaining the position by which he is dignified and his clan exalted. He recognizes his responsibility for the welfare of the tribe—not only for success in battle and food-getting, but for stilling storms at sea, protecting the aguajes from the drought-demons, and securing all other benefits, both physical and magical; he must be aggressive yet cautious on the warpath, fleet and enduring in retreat, indomitable in the chase, bold but not reckless on the balsa, and above all panoplied and favored by the shadowy potencies of air and earth and waters; he must be the local and lowly Admirable Crichton, and his never-neglected watchword must be *noblesse oblige*. His practical devices for maintaining prestige are many and diverse; it is commonly the chief who carries the sym-

642 621 618 714 [186] [406]

The third specification states that a kin group, to constitute a clan, must exhibit actual social integration. Murdock stresses the necessity of observing a positive group sentiment, such as would be manifested by organized collective activities or group functions, before the group can be characterized as a clan. An essential feature of this group sentiment is the inclusion of the wife as an integral member of her husband's kin group.

621 618 [628] [622] [701] [583] [406]

This sort of social integration was indeed exhibited by the Seri kin group of each subdivision. It was, in fact, fostered by the isolation brought about by the inhabitants' reservation of hunting and fishing rights for themselves. Tension existed between certain subdivisions and, since there was no chief, the oldest capable male organized and led the fighting force of the clan. In times of need, the members of the group united to give mutual assistance. The groom-to-be could expect material aid from his fellow clan members in the payment of the bride price. Mutual assistance was given in the fulfillment of puberty ceremony and burial obligations. The men cooperated in their hunting and fishing expeditions. The women of the clan, including the in-married spouses, cooperated in the gathering and sharing of food. Everyone could attend the various fiestas. It is said that in the performance of these collective activities, close harmony generally prevailed.

BAND INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS

642 619 578 [648]

The division of the Seri tribe into bands was likely brought about through internal strife. During the period of band history known to the present-day Seri,[5] however, serious skirmishes seem to have been fought predominantly with non-Seri groups.[6]

Band I

642 621 628 578 [721] [648]

Band I internal relations appear to have been relatively peaceful. The inhabitants of subdivisions 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 were fishermen as well as hunters and gatherers, whereas the people of subdivision 6 preferred to subsist on gathered food and wild game. Also, the members of Band I robbed cattle and horses, which pursuit brought reprisals from the Mexican ranchers. There was apparently considerable social intercourse among the six subdivisions, even to the extent that hunting rights of one were sometimes granted to inhabitants of a neighboring section.

Trouble developed when some members of Band I speared fish within the domain of Band V. Here also bitter fighting broke out, and any semblance of peaceful co-existence between the two groups was destroyed.

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Except for the occurrence of several battles, relations between Bands I and III were peaceful.

Relations with non-Seri groups were not always peaceful. For many years the members of Band I were on friendly terms with the Papago; they often camped together and even intermarried. Due to a misunderstanding,[10] fighting erupted between the two groups and many people were killed in the years which followed. 642 648

BAND II

The external relations of Band II were decidedly turbulent. Although their primary base of operations was a coastal area, the people did not use the ocean as a source of food. They preferred beef and horse meat which was easily acquired by stealing animals from ranches. Here again the wrath of the ranchers and the government was incurred. [262] [721]

A small group of Yaqui eventually joined Band II and intermarried with them. The Seri claim that the Yaqui induced the warriors of this band to assault travelers on the road between Hermosillo and Guaymas. Coyote Iguana, who according to Seri tradition captured Lola Casanova, was of this band. This activity soon brought retribution from the government. Later, dissension arose between these Seri and the Yaqui. [582]

The enmity and strife that occurred between Bands II and V were mentioned above.

BAND III

642 578 628 621

The history of the internal relations of this band on Tiburon Island seems to have been marked by periods of violence. Battles between subdivisions sometimes occurred; however, they were usually short-lived and soon forgotten. A major struggle once occurred when a shaman named *ʔapetla* "the invincible one" and warriors from subdivision 4 made repeated raids upon the neighboring subdivisions and killed many. Eventually, his enemies overcame their fear and destroyed the killer. [721]

642 648 721

Although the inhabitants of Band III were hunters, gatherers, and fishermen, they began to rob cattle once they became established on the mainland. They too incurred the wrath of ranchers and the government.

BAND IV

642 621 628

Since the members of this band were, by choice, inhabiting an inland area of Tiburon Island, they lived in relative isolation as hunters and gatherers. Their primary contacts were with members of Band III with whom they intermarried. [361] [582]

BAND V

These people were apparently hunters, gatherers, and fishermen. It is said that they speared fish from the shore since they did not use *balsas*. They too apparently raided the ranches. Their warring nature has already been discussed; it resulted in the acquisition of few friends. However, several marriages between members of this band and members of subdivision 2 of Band III are said to have occurred.

BAND VI

The members of Band VI lived on San Esteban Island and were the most primitive of the tribe. They lived in huts made of driftwood and in caves and made extensive use of the balsa. Although they did not have the bow and arrow, they did become expert in the use of the spear. The people depended mainly on a seafood, iguana, and maguey diet.

Perhaps it was due to the confined living space on the small island with the accompanying lack of fresh water that relations between the four subdivisions were precarious and fights broke out frequently. The Seri today stress the fact that the members of this band were impetuous and unpredictable.

Their relations with the other bands were generally good however. Seri from Band III were free to visit San Esteban where they were well treated.

The San Esteban people seldom traveled to the mainland, and, since they spoke no Spanish, it is probable that they made no peaceful contact with non-Seri groups.

COLLAPSE OF THE BAND SYSTEM

Internal strife in the Seri tribe was probably a major factor in the establishment of the band system. External strife was a major factor in its downfall.

Reference has been made to the plundering, killings and rustling of cattle to which certain of the bands were dedicated. The concern of the Sonora government was aroused, and steps were taken to crush the rebellious groups. According to the present-day Seri, military action by army units and rancher outfits against the various bands resulted in the near-destruction of the whole tribe.[11]